

Gathering 101 Materials

2019 LCMS Youth Gathering



REAL.
PRESENT.
GOD.

2019 LCMS Youth Gathering



#NYG2019 | lcmsgathering.com



2019 Gathering Media & Communication Projects

The Gathering provides various means of communication to assist leaders before, during and after the event. These resources are intended to prepare groups for the event, facilitate conversations around the theme and scripture focus, and connect the Gathering to the church at large. Below is a list of the 2019 Gathering resources:

Website: www.lcmsgathering.com

The Gathering website is the primary communication tool before, during, and after the Gathering.

- **Pre-Gathering:** Find all Gathering registration information, Bible studies, media kit, group building activities, Adult Leader practical tips, promotional items, event schedule and speakers and more.
- **During the event:** The site is updated with daily photos, news releases and stories to connect with parents and congregations back home. This will also be the place to tune into the live streaming of all Stadium Events.
- **Post-Gathering:** The Gathering is more than a five-day event. Find post-Gathering resources to (1) help share the **Real. Present. God.** message with home congregations and communities and (2) continue digesting and growing in the one true faith.

Gathering Update emails

Sign up to receive regular Gathering update emails including information on resources and upcoming dates, deadlines and events. Sign up at www.lcmsgathering.com and enter your email address at the bottom of the page.

Social Media

Stay informed about pre-Gathering planning resources while connecting with Gathering planners and other leaders on the Gathering's Facebook and Twitter accounts. Inspirational memes and youth-focused images will be shared on the Gathering's Instagram account. During the days of the Gathering, daily updates and messages from Gathering leaders, speakers and Morning Session leaders will be uploaded on the Gathering Snapchat. Adult Leaders are especially encouraged to join the Gathering Adult Leader Facebook group. This is an active, helpful group of over 2,700 leaders filled with knowledge and expertise. It's a great place to connect new leaders, get questions answered and be encouraged: www.facebook.com/groups/NYGadultleaders/

Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and Snapchat will also be used during the Gathering program to reinforce the messages being heard throughout the event and to send event updates as needed. Continue the **Real. Present. God.** discussion back home by remaining connected to these platforms for encouragement and discussion after the Gathering has ended.



2019 Gathering Media & Communication Projects

Webinars

Gathering planners will host monthly webinars on the **first Thursday of every month** as a means to train and further equip Adult Leaders as they walk through the Gathering process. Topics will include a general overview of the Gathering purpose; navigating the registration waters; a typical day at the Gathering, etc. Webinars will be promoted online and through Gathering Update emails. They will also be archived on the LCMS Gathering YouTube channel (www.youtube.com/user/lcmsgathering). All webinars will be hosted by Zoom Meeting.

Gathering App & Cell Phones

The Gathering App will play a key role in the 2019 Gathering communication strategy. Similar to 2016, participants will be able to view event information such as scheduling, Session descriptions, speaker information, Minneapolis maps and helpful tips, social media connection points, etc. In addition, the Gathering app will be a key way of communicating event updates such as a change in room number for an event through push notification services. Please encourage all Adult Leaders and participants to download the app or make sure at least one Adult Leader in their group has the ability to download the app and communicate the information to others. Our goal is to have the app live 3 months prior to the Gathering.

If needed, Gathering planners have a texting service in place for emergency use only. Adult Leaders will receive important Gathering updates (e.g. safety) sent via text message.

A note about the use of social media, smartphones, etc. at the Gathering

The extent to which participants can use their phones and other devices during the Gathering is at the discretion of their Adult Leaders. The use of cell phones and social media is meant to enhance the Gathering experience, not distract from it. Key points from the Gathering will be understood regardless of participants' use of these devices.

Post-Gathering Videos

Videos contain recaps and still photos of the entire Gathering program. The goal is to have the Gathering recap video available online shortly after the Gathering is completed, allowing for congregational use upon return home. All videos will be uploaded to the Gathering YouTube channel following the event.



2019 Gathering Media & Communication Projects

For Adult Leaders

The Gathering provides online resources and training to assist groups preparing for the Gathering. Training resources such as webinars and Facebook chats will allow for 'real time' interaction between planners and leaders as they prepare for 2019.

Continue to use the website (www.lcmsgathering.com/prepare) to build a strong Adult Leader core. Bible study and community group building resources will continue to be added throughout the process to grow your group as a community. Bible studies will also be provided on-site and post-Gathering to continue to grow together.

The Gathering has enhanced its on-site adult support team to help build community amongst Adult Leaders and support them in their numerous vocations. This team is working on pre-Gathering material and support, on-site resources and sessions, and post-Gathering encouragement. The faithful commitment of caring and connected Adult Leaders working intentionally with youth participants in the context of community groups enrich the youth's experience. (See the Adult Leader training section of this manual for additional information on resources.)

District Coordinators

District Coordinators serve as liaisons between LCMS Youth Ministry, the district office, district youth board/committee and congregations for the 2019 LCMS Youth Gathering. They have been trained and stand ready to aid Adult Leaders as you prepare. The listing of District Coordinators is available at www.lcmsgathering.com/district-coordinators. Be sure to connect with your District Coordinator at NATIONAL18 or in the months to come regarding district events, tshirts, transportation needs and more.



Tentative 2019 LCMS Youth Gathering Schedule

Wednesday, July 10, 2019

1-5p Early Registration, tentative
Pre-Gathering Orientation Sessions

Thursday – July 11, 2019

8a-6p Registration, tentative
Pre-Gathering Orientation Sessions

Potential Slot for District Event

8:30p **Mass Event (U.S. Bank Stadium)**
Late Night Options

Friday – July 12, 2019

TBD: **Adult Leader Morning Meeting**
Servant Event Deployment

MORNING (9:00a - 12:00p)
Morning Sessions
Convention Center and selected Hotels

Interactive Center Opens

AFTERNOON (12:00p - 6:00p)
Breakout and Intensive Sessions
Adult Leader Sessions
Interactive Center

6:00p Interactive Center and convention center close

EVENING (6:00p - Midnight)

Potential Slot for District Event

8:30p **Mass Event**
Mass Event Plus
Late Night Community Group Activities

Saturday – July 13, 2019

TBD: **Adult Leader Morning Meeting**
Servant Event Deployment

MORNING (9:00a - 12:00p)
Morning Session
Convention Center and selected Hotels

Interactive Center Opens

Saturday – July 13, 2019 (continued)

AFTERNOON (12:00p - 6:00p)
Breakout and Intensive Sessions
Adult Leader Sessions
Interactive Center

6:00p Interactive Center and convention center close

EVENING (6:00p - Midnight)

Potential Slot for District Event

8:30p **Mass Event**
Mass Event Plus
Late Night Community Group Activities

Sunday – July 14, 2019

TBD: **Adult Leader Morning Meeting**
Servant Event Deployment
5K Walk/Run (Tentative)

MORNING (9:00a - 12:00p)
Morning Session
Convention Center and selected Hotels

Interactive Center Opens

AFTERNOON (12:00p - 6:00p)
Breakout and Intensive Sessions
Adult Leader Sessions
Interactive Center

6:00p Interactive Center and convention center close

EVENING (6:00p - Midnight)

Potential Slot for District Event

8:30p **Mass Event**
NO Mass Event Plus
Late Night Community Group Activities

Monday – July 15, 2019

TBD: **Adult Leader Morning Meeting**

9:00a **Gathering Worship Service**
Following the Benediction, there will be a short closing of thanks and dismissal.

11:00a Expected end of the Stadium Event

12:00p End of Gathering



4 Things We Do Together Daily

Morning Session

These sessions will take place 1) at the Minneapolis Convention Center in spaces assigned by hotel placement and 2) in specific hotels with appropriate ballroom space. These large-group Bible studies will be in assemblies ranging from 1,000 - 6,000 participants.

- Over the three days (Friday, Saturday, Sunday), Morning Sessions will dig deeper into Psalm 46.
- Morning Sessions will serve to communicate program updates and propel participants into Gathering program which happens throughout the day.
- Resources will be made available for further study in community groups. These studies can take place throughout the days of the Gathering and after the event.

Community Groups

Gathering participants attend the event in “community groups.” Community groups are made up of at least one adult and generally no more than ten (10) youth. (Congregations with more than ten (10) total people usually have multiple community groups.) Community groups are vital for fostering care and communication within the group during preparation, the event, and post-Gathering events.

Community Group time at the Gathering provides participants the opportunity to be in God’s Word in a close setting and process what they’re learning with people they trust. Community Group time can happen multiple times per day where it works best for each group. As the Psalms were made to be read and prayed in community, we gather to reflect, repent, praise and pray to shape our community in Christ. Through this interaction, participants will have opportunities to learn more about life in Christ and life in the Church. **Real. Present. God.** will bring LCMS youth and adults together for five days of large-group activities, but it is the experience within community groups that form the core of the Gathering experience and nurtures future faith development.

Numerous resources are provided on the Gathering website and many more will be added as we near the event.

Reference: www.lcmsgathering.com/prepare



4 Things We Do Together Daily

Stadium Events

Mass Events

The Gathering will have five Stadium Events, one per day. Each Mass Event at U.S. Bank Stadium will focus on “Real. Present. God.” through Christ-centered presenters, music, videos, and group participation.

Some highlights/changes:

- The Gathering Worship service will take place on Monday, July 15 to close the event. We look forward to this opportunity to send the participants back home refreshed with God’s Word and gifts. We are also planning to have a short closing time following the benediction of the service for safe departure and final announcements.
- Mass Event Plus will happen again in 2019, this time on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday evenings. Mass Event Plus is additional program that takes place in the U.S. Bank Stadium following a 15-minute break after the Mass Event. Examples of program from 2016 were the Skit Guys and Rend Collective. About 12,000 participants remained for the Rend Collective performance. The Skit Guys performed on Monday evening in front of about 18,000 participants. Mass Event Plus will not happen on Sunday to allow for worship setup.

Worship

The Gathering worship service will take place on July 15, 2019, at 9:00 a.m. (time tentative) in U.S. Bank Stadium. Christ’s life, death, and resurrection will be celebrated at the Divine Service. Holy Communion will be celebrated, and youth will participate in the Gathering Wind Symphony and Choir.

Featured Adult Sessions

On Friday, Saturday and Sunday we will host a Featured Adult Session. We are asking at least 1 adult from each congregation to attend each day. This session will feature a top-level leader addressing the big issues of youth ministry and today’s culture. It will also give a preview of Mass Events and Community Group time to prepare you for what your group will encounter that day.



Personalize Your Gathering

Interactive Center/Convention Center Halls

The Interactive Center is found at the convention center and provides hands-on learning experiences. One portion of the floor will focus on service opportunities such as canned food drives, collection of items for those in need, etc. The Interactive Center will also host the youth booth, exhibitors, and district booths.

Sessions

Breakout Sessions

Breakout Sessions are hour-long sessions during which presenters dig into God's Word and important topics or tell their witness of the **Real. Present. God.** Most sessions are speaker-based while some provide opportunities to laugh and learn while interacting with presenters and performers. Concerts will open some breakout sessions with music performed by Christian bands and musicians.

Intensive Sessions

Intensive Sessions: are designed to challenge youth to explore topics at a deeper level. Leaders will teach advanced theological topics, approach difficult practical questions, and give participants tools for studying the topic beyond the Gathering.

Adult Sessions

Adult Sessions: are designed to equip and encourage adult leaders to lead their youth ministry, know youth culture and strengthen youth ministry back home.

Community Group Connection

There will be several opportunities for Community Groups to interact with other Community Groups. We are planning community connection times in the park outside U.S. Bank Stadium before Mass Events and for those waiting for transportation follow Mass Events.



Personalize Your Gathering

Servant Events

Gathering servant events will take place on the mornings of July 12, 13, and 14. Tentatively, servant events will deploy from the convention center, U.S. Bank Stadium, and hotels outside of Downtown. Deployment location will be based on hotel assignment. Gathering planners hope to secure 10,000-12,000 service spots for Gathering participants over the days of the Gathering. Saturday and Sunday's numbers may be lighter due to the weekend.

5K Run/Walk

A few highlights/changes:

- The route will most likely be through the city in the general area of the convention center.
- An effort/charity will again benefit from a part of the 5K registration fee. (Registration will probably be hosted by a program separate from the Gathering registration program.)
- Registration before the Gathering will be **required**. This requirement will allow on-site registration to go more smoothly (t-shirt distribution, timing devices, etc.).
- We will divide the race between those who are running seriously for time (given a timing device) and those running for fun or walking.

Mass Event Plus

Mass Event Plus will take place on Thursday, Friday and Saturday evening fifteen minutes after the Mass Event. Each event will feature a top-level performer or band for a 45-minute extended concert/performance.

District Events

Many LCMS Districts have planned an event/activity to gather together and celebrate your District community. *Registration before the Gathering will be required and handled by each District. Information will be available on the Gathering website.*

Late Night Options

Along with Mass Event Plus, other limited late-night (after Mass Event) programming will take place in Gathering hotels and other locations in the downtown Minneapolis area. Opportunities will focus on community group and prayer time. Tentatively, activities are planned in The Commons for people who are waiting transportation following Mass Events.



Gathering Program Notes

Adult Leaders are to be the first line of supervision and in relationship with the teens in their groups. The Gathering suggests that each community group have at least two adults so that Adult Leaders may also receive care and grow in their many vocations. Adult Leaders can take turns attending events with their youth in order that they might connect with other resources at the Gathering such as Adult Sessions and connection opportunities with other Adult Leaders.

Program Options - Registration

A goal of the 2019 Gathering is to distribute the opportunity to attend specific program options. Specific goals of this process:

- Allow groups to give preference for pre-selection options at the time of registration.
 - » This process assists Gathering planners to distribute resources to program options desired by Gathering participants.
- Congregational groups/members will not be slotted for more than one program option, allowing for more people to access these program offerings.

Early proposals for pre-selection options:

- Off-site servant event
- On-site servant event (service at the convention center, not including food packing)
- Food Packing (on-site at the convention center or off-site)

Information Booths

Look for booths in the convention center and U.S. Bank Stadium. The YELLOW-shirted CLBs staffing these will be able to help Adult Leaders (or direct them to help) with all sorts of things such as lost people, directions, schedules, emergency assistance, wristband problems, etc.

HelpLine

The Gathering HelpLine opens 24 hours before the start of the Gathering and stays open 24 hours after the Gathering. Its phone number appears on every participant's wristband. Well-trained advisors will be on-hand at Event Base to help adult leaders, participants, or people back home. They are able to talk through problems, get urgent questions answered, or deal with a crisis.

First Aid Stations

These are placed throughout the convention center and stadium. First Aid assistance is available when an emergency arises. Assistance can also be accessed through HelpLine. The Gathering Book and app will have more details.



Gathering Program Notes

Lost Person Area

Problems result from groups or individuals that get separated from one another, or cell phones don't work or are lost. First, Adult Leaders should have the cell phone numbers of each youth participant in their group. Secondly, have a plan in place should technology fail. We also will have a process in place to reconnect when all else fails. Please do direct your group members to stop by the nearest information booth or call HelpLine if they need assistance.

Crisis Management

CLBs will have resources for emergency or crisis procedures and may serve as a connection to emergency personnel and the care crew. This team is made up of professional people prepared to help in critical situations requiring special assistance.

Hotel Support

CLBs offer support and encouragement to the Adult Leaders who are shepherding the youth and monitoring the behavior of people in hotels. CLBs serve as a liaison between the hotel management and community groups as an arbitrator only when assistance is required. Adult Leaders are to be the first line of supervision and in relationship with the teens in their groups.

Gathering Communications/Information Services

The Gathering App will be the hub for Gathering information, including up-to-date program information. The Gathering Information Services and Media Teams continue to utilize technology and social media to organize information and create a safe environment for Gathering participants. Information Booths will be present throughout the Gathering facilities to connect participants with the most updated information about the Gathering program.

Adult Leader Rest Area

The Gathering will again host an Adult Rest Area at the convention center which Adult Leaders can get a charge, receive information about the Gathering and Youth Ministry, and have an opportunity to rest.

Coaching

There will be an experienced team of leaders with a depth of ministry experience. They will be available to encourage you as you lead your group at the Gathering and beyond. Whether you are a volunteer or paid leader they can help with practical youth ministry ideas, ministry plans, conflict and problem solving, personal mentoring and youth ministry direction.

12 Month Youth Ministry Plan

The Gathering is more than a 5 day event. After the Gathering, one year of resources (including Bible studies and monthly webinars) will be provided for Adult Leaders. The Gathering website, social media accounts, and post-Gathering videos will provide reminders and resources.